

THE ARLINGTON PARTNERSHIP FOR CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES

Community Engagement Process April – July 2015



APCYF is a community led organization with a mix of appointed community, county and school staff members who share one vision: Arlington, a community where all young people and families are valued, supported and empowered.

The APCYF mission is to improve the health, wellbeing and safety of children, youth and families in Arlington by researching young people's needs; advocating for improved policies and programs to meet those needs; and engaging the community as part of the solution.

Every 3 or so years, we compile data from our research – primarily we use data from two surveys, the Developmental Assets Surveys (developed by Search Institute) and the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (developed by CDC) that were given to students grades 6, 8, 10 and 12. We also include data from the State and Arlington that include information on the health and well-being of our children, youth and families.

We pull it all together in the Arlington Community Report Card. This document can serve as support for a grant, guidance for programming, or as a call to action through the community engagement process.

This past April, we held a meeting with close to 100 participants to talk about the four items that the APCYF felt needed additional conversation.

Based on the data and discussions we've had over the past year, we chose four priorities to focus on. They are:

- Bullying – in the community and at school
- Childhood Obesity – prevention from ages 0-5
- Mental Health – pre-teen and teen depressive symptoms and attempted suicide
- Positive Family Communications – parent and child interactions

Since April, workgroups on each of these issues have been meeting to narrow the focus, discuss strategies and barriers, and how to reach the wider community.



Bullying Workgroup

Develop a clear definition of bullying to share with APS, ACG and the Community.
Support appropriate consequences for parents and kids.
Provide example to demonstrate what bullying is/is not through PSAs on YouTube and through other social media.
This group has joined forces with the Care for a Change Initiative and the TNB Peer Relations Committee.



Childhood Obesity Workgroup

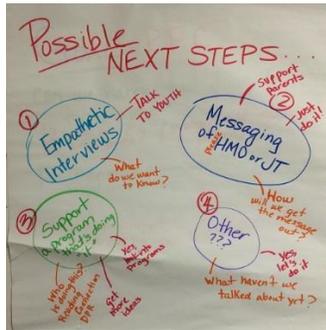
This group will be gathering additional data from the community through empathetic interviews asking:

- What do you need from your community to facilitate a healthy life?
- How do you define community?
- How do you define healthy?
- This additional data will help inform strategies for sectors within the community.

This group is a combination of members of the Pediatric Obesity Workgroup, the Healthy Community Action Team, and Healthier Arlington.

Mental Health Workgroup

The focus for this group is on the Depressive Symptoms and Attempted Suicide and the data that is collected in the Youth Risk Behavior Survey.
Strategies that address anxiety, stress and the negative stigma around Mental Health Illnesses.
This group is joining forces with the Mental Health Task Force to work on the Whole Child Conference.



Positive Family Communications Workgroup

Improve positive family communications through:

- Developing communication skills for both parents and children
- Coaching families in the appropriate developmental stages of communications
- Working with all ages, infancy to adult
- The goal is to change behaviors

This workgroup has combined with the Developmental Assets Committee to strengthen their messages.

Over the summer the groups gathered additional information through a combination of empathetic interviews, focus groups, and meetings with additional stakeholders to test some of the strategies to make sure we're reaching a wide swath of people in Arlington, including youth!

Now we'll be working to communicate our findings with both the School and County Boards as well as the community.

Outcomes include:

- Conferences and/or Workshop series for parents, providers, youth
- Video clips and information available via social media
- Additional strategies being implemented by various members of the community.
- Presence at community events to increase awareness.